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BANGLADESH: ARCHBISHOP RECEIVES PEACE AWARD ON FIRST NON-VIOLENCE DAY

Archbishop Paulinus Costa of Dhaka, president of the Bangladesh bishops' conference and former communication chairman of the Bangladesh bishops' conference, received the Mahatma Gandhi Peace Award on Oct 2, the first annual observance of International Day of Non-Violence. The function held in Dhaka was organized by the Mahatma Gandhi Research Council on the 138th birth anniversary of the Indian civil rights icon. Three other religious leaders received the award as did a herbal treatment researcher, a national weekly editor and the chairman of a local TV channel. The United Nations General Assembly announced on June 15 its decision to designate Oct 2 each year as the International Day of Non-Violence. (THE HERALD)

THAILAND: ASSUMPTION SCHOOLS CELEBRATE WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY

The three Assumption Schools in Thailand - Assumption School, Assumption Convent and Assumption Suksa - along with the Catholic Mass Media of Bangkok archdiocese celebrated the 41st World Communications Day in Assumption School campus, Bangkok on Aug 3. The celebration was organized by the Catholic Social Communications of Thailand (CSCT), the national communications center of the Thai Church, together with the social communications commission of Bangkok archdiocese.

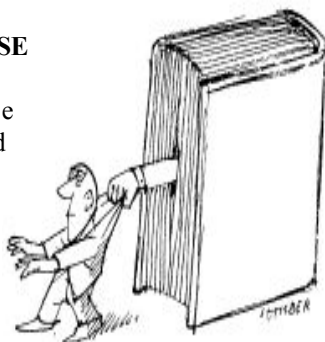
(CBCT NEWSLETTER)

MACAU: WORLDWIDE CHINESE BIBLICAL MEETING

More than a hundred Chinese Catholics from 17 countries and regions attended the eighth meeting of the United Chinese Catholic Biblical Association (UCCBA) Nov 1-5 hosted by Macau diocese. UCCBA, established in 1990, is a union of Bible groups of Chinese Catholics worldwide. It aims to promote sharing and daily reading of the Bible and evangelization in Chinese communities around the world. In 1993, the organization joined the Catholic Biblical Federation (CBF), an association of international and local Catholic groups committed to biblical-pastoral ministry. (UCANEWS)

THAILAND: MEDIA WORKSHOP FOR RELIGIOUS SISTERS

Some 50 sisters from eight religious congregations attended a media education workshop in Samphran, Thailand August 17-19. The workshop was organized by the Catholic Social Communications of Thailand (CSCT) in coordination with the Association of Religious Women in Thailand. The three days seminar aimed at raising awareness of the media's influence on values and lifestyles of young people. (CBCT NEWSLETTER)



INDIA: CATHOLIC BISHOPS WANT CUTS IN SHEKKAR KAPOOR'S FILM 'ELIZABETH'

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) has urged the chairperson of the Central Board of Films Certification (CBFC), Sharmila Tagore, to censor "anti-Catholic scenes" in the English movie "Elizabeth" by Director Shekhar Kapoor. In a letter Nov 21 to Sharmila, Archbishop Stanislaus Fernandes, CBCI secretary general, appealed for considering the sentiments of Christians in the country before approving the controversial film. The CBCI had intervened last year before the film "The Da Vinci Code" was released. As a result, the film was shown with a disclaimer that it was a work of fiction. The CBCI has sought a similar disclaimer for "Elizabeth." (SAR NEWS)

PHILIPPINES: CACERES ARCHDIOCESE LAUNCHES TV PROGRAM

The Commission on Communications of Caceres archdiocese (CCCOM) has launched a 30-minute TV program titled "Simbanwaan" (church community) on Aug 18. The program aired over PBN TV5-Naga includes information about activities and social services of the archdiocese as well as discussion of social issues. CCCOM Director Fr Louis Occiano hopes the TV program will teach people the important mission of the Church. "Simbanwaan" merges two words in the local dialect: *simbahan* or church, and *banwaan* which means community. The seat of Caceres archdiocese is Naga City in Camarines Sur, some 377 kilometers south east of Manila. (AN BANGRAW)

PAKISTAN: 3-DAY COMMUNICATION SEMINAR

Rabita Manzil, the communications center of Lahore archdiocese, conducted a three-day communication seminar for eight novices of different religious congregations Oct 8-10. Rabita Manzil Director, Fr Nadeem John Shakir, facilitated the seminar along with UCANEWS Pakistan Bureau Chief, Kamran Chaudhry, and Radio Veritas Asia - Urdu Service Coordinator, Iram Inayat. The participants were introduced to Catholic media operating in Pakistan. (RM)

INDIA: CHURCH MEDIA INSTITUTE COMPLETES 10 YEARS

The National Institute of Social Communication Research and Training (NISCORT) completes 10 years in 2007 despite challenges like staff turnover, publicity shortcomings, indifference of bishops and inadequate funding, says NISCORT Director Fr. Jude Botelho. The institute was launched in 1997 as a small room in the Delhi archbishop's house. In 2003, it moved to its 1.61-hectare campus about 15 kilometers east of New Delhi. It houses a library of more than 3,000 volumes, a video studio, two audio studios and a hostel that can accommodate 70 students. Bishop Patrick Paul D'Souza, retired bishop of Varanasi and NISCORT's founding chairperson said the institute has helped many nuns and priests learn communication basics, and some of its 200 alumni now manage communication centers in dioceses and religious congregations. (UCANEWS)

CAMBODIA: PARISH TEACHES TRADITIONAL DANCE TO YOUNG CATHOLICS

The parish in Kompong Thom, some 130 kilometers north of Phnom Penh, is teaching traditional Khmer dances to Catholic youths. Daily throughout August about 60 students aged 12-22 came from different Church communities around Kompong Thom province to attend the one-month dance program. They in turn will teach those dances to their communities. The program was launched in 1993. Van Makara, 18, one of the two volunteer dance teachers, said "Khmer dance is very important for the Cambodian people, because it is our culture." Sister Porntip Keo King, a Thai missionary nun working in Kompong Thom, said this program will "help Catholic youth appreciate their own culture." (UCANEWS)

INDIA: SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH PLANS WEB PORTAL

The Syro-Malabar Church (SMC) plans to link its 2,700 parishes, 15,000 institutions and 7,000 religious formation houses in two continents through a web portal. This plan was approved at the 10-day SMC synod which ended Aug 31 in Kochi, the Church's headquarters in the southern state Kerala. "We want to develop effective communication channels, between the Church and the world, between the hierarchy and members, and among all the various sections of the people of God," Syro-Malabar Archbishop Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil of Ernakulam-Angamal said. Our Church has a duty to venture into this advanced field of communications, he added. Fifteen of the 27 SMC dioceses are in Kerala. The others are in various parts of India except for one diocese, based in Chicago, the United States that services Syro-Malabar Catholics in North America. (UCANEWS)

KOREA: CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN, TRADITIONAL KOREAN MUSIC ACCEPTABLE IN LITURGY, MUSICIANS SAY

Some 150 choir members, composers, conductors and musicians took part in the third meeting of Catholic Liturgical Musicians in Seoul Sept 1. The meeting organized by the Korean bishops' Committee for Liturgy, headed by Bishop Joseph Lee Han-taek of Uijeongbu, discussed the potential use of contemporary music and traditional Korean music during Mass and other liturgical celebrations. In his keynote address, the prelate said the meeting showed the Church's desire to embrace both contemporary Christian music and traditional Korean music in liturgy. The Church idealizes Gregorian chants and Latin music, he acknowledges, but added that sacred music is not to be relegated to "specialists" and should be alive for the congregation. He urged "openness and flexibility" in incorporating different forms of music into the liturgy, provided they maintain the dignity of the service. (UCANEWS)

INDONESIA: CATHOLICS IN PAPUA LAUNCH BIBLE MONTH

More than 1,000 Catholics launched National Bible Month in Merauke archdiocese by carrying a bible in a seven-kilometer procession on Sept 1. Sacred Heart Father Kayetanus Tarong, parish priest of St Mary of Fatima church in Kelapa Lima, sent off the procession led by four altar boys carrying a large bible on a wooden stretcher. The pilgrimage, which ended in a cemetery called *Patale Sai* (missioners' burial ground), aimed "to encourage all Catholics to respect the Bible, which contains all faith experiences," the priest said. Merauke is the capital of Merauke district, some 3,670 kilometers east of Jakarta. (UCANEWS)



INDIA: ANY APPROPRIATE OCCASION IS SUITABLE TO TELL JESUS' STORY, CARDINAL GRACIAS

Cardinal Oswald Gracias of Mumbai inaugurated the three-day *Kristhotsava* celebration (festival of Jesus Christ) of eleven dioceses of Karnataka in Bangalore Nov 8-10. At the opening Mass, the prelate said Christian discipleship entails our readiness to witness and tell the story of Jesus. "With courage, we must proclaim that He is everything for us; otherwise, we are not disciples of Jesus." "Any appropriate occasion is suitable to spread the Gospel. Any appropriate occasion for us to tell the Good News will be good," the Cardinal added. He was elevated to Cardinal by Pope Benedict XVI in Rome Nov 24. (SAR NEWS)

INDIA: CREATOR OF DALJIWORLD.COM WEBSITE HONORED

The creator of the website <dajiworld.com>, Walter Nandalike, was honored in a private function in Mangalore, Karnataka on Nov 6. Bishop Aloysius D'Souza of Mangalore cited Walter for providing Mangaloreans throughout the world a means to connect and reconnect. Dijiworld.com not only disseminates news but serves social causes as well. "It is a pride of Mangalore," the bishop added. The function was organized by "Pingara," a Kannada fortnightly. (SAR NEWS)

CAMBODIA: CARITAS STAFF TRAINED IN COMMUNICATIONS

About 30 staff involved in Caritas projects came together Aug 31-Sept 1 for a seminar and workshop on media communications at the Caritas Cambodia office in Siem Reap, 230 kilometers northwest of Phnom Penh. Patrick Nicholson, head of communications for Caritas Internationalis, led the seminar and taught the participants how to write news reports. He also gave an introduction to photography. Caritas Cambodia is the social service organization of the local Catholic Church. It works through its grassroots Village Development Associations in about 250 villages in six of Cambodia's 20 provinces. (UCANEWS)

PHILIPPINES: SONGS ON VIRTUE AND CITIZENSHIP AT YOUTH CONCERT

Father Carmelo Diola of Cebu archdiocese convened eleven rock, heavy metal and pop bands in a concert at Cebu Coliseum Aug 25, which was attended by some 2,000 students, nuns, Church workers and foreign tourists. A joint compact disc (CD) was also produced aiming to promote Christian and civic virtues, especially among youths. The bands roused the crowd to sing with them songs about garbage, paying taxes and going to church. From what he saw at the concert, Fr Diola said band members seemed "more effective preachers than a priest on the pulpit." (UCANEWS)

CHINA: WEBSITE'S CONVENTIONAL AND CYBERSPACE RETREATS TOUCH PARTICIPANTS

Some 20 youth volunteers managing various pages of the *Tianren* (God-people) Rainbow Bridge website <www.tianren.org> met at a two-day retreat in early October in Wenzhou diocese, Zhejiang province, eastern China. The young people coming from Shanghai city, Guangdong, Shaanxi, Sichuan and Fujian provinces and other parts of China found the time together spiritually "enriching." The retreat "motivated us to work harder to evangelize through the Internet," said one participant. The Tianren website includes Church news, daily Bible readings, reflections, Catholic electronic books, a discussion forum and chatroom. The website had previously held two one-day online retreats in August and in September, with about 40 participants. During the Sept 8 online retreat, participants used headphones to listen to a priest's presentations and then shared their experiences using group instant messaging. (UCANEWS)